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Supervisor: Jakob Gustavsson

Reconsidering the Korean National Community Unification Formula:

A Constructivist Approach to North Korean Identities and Interests

Beste Alpay

Abstract

The Formula for Unification via a National Community which has been the official unification formula of South Korea has served as a framework for reunification policies of previous South Korean governments. The thesis focuses on the community-building approach of the South Korean formula and explains why a formula which prioritized economic-community has not served as an adequate formula for South Korean foreign policy. The thesis derives from the Three Communities Initiative of the Lee Myung Bak government and builds its argument on the necessity of forming a peace community before establishing economic relations. It aims to answer why a peace community should be prioritized by looking for the traces of “military first politics” in North Korean identities and interests which are analyzed through the constructivist perspective of Alexander Wendt. It was found that North Korean identities are largely affected by self-reliance (*Juche*) and military first politics (*Songun*) ideologies which lay the grounds for military interests motivating excessive militarization and nuclearization of Pyongyang. Whereas Pyongyang’s motivations are embedded in identities constituted by these two ideologies, it is difficult to imagine a North Korea which prioritizes economic cooperation over its self-help concerns, which could explain why NCUF needs to be amended.

Keywords: North Korea, Wendt, Juche, Songun, reunification policy, Korean National Community Unification Formula, Three Communities Initiative

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

More than half a century has passed since the division of Korean people who had been living homogeneously on the same territory for thousands of years, sharing the same history and bloodline. Certainly this division was not only territorial; it also created two different political, economic, cultural and social systems that increased the dissimilarity between two peoples (Kwak 2009: 46).

The question of Korean reunification is one of the most significant contemporary issues because of several reasons. Firstly Korean unification should be considered from an international perspective; in that sense it is the key to the stability of the Northeast Asia. The division of Korean Peninsula creates a confrontation in the region, the USA efforts to strengthen its military alliances with Tokyo and Seoul is a threat for security and well being. As long as this confrontation is perceived as a threat by Pyongyang, Seoul will be considered as an enemy. Moreover Korea has been the object of interest and competition for the major powers, a sovereign unified Korea would end the competition among these powers for influence over the region (Ma 2010: 18). Secondly there is excessive military spending that is spent for around 2 million troops in both countries. Unification could help most of this expenditure to be saved for social services and release military personnel for other productive purposes. Thirdly the two Korean societies were forced to accept different political systems which shaped their values and personalities and the longer they are divided the more heterogeneous the Korean society gets and this creates a greater burden for integration (Shuja 2003: 66). Fourthly the unification could end not only traditional security issues but also human security issues in North Korea such as the famine which results from the failed Public Distribution System and other human rights issues.

Most scholars who study Korean unification agree that the reunification should happen under South Korean guidance, especially because there is a large gap between the two Koreas; Seoul has become an important global actor in the 21st century, it is a country that has advanced in many areas such as economic, culture and democracy and it could serve as a model for North Korea (Cho et al., 2011: 7). Moreover South Korea has engaged in many initiatives that aimed unification, many politicians have involved a unification policy into their agendas and the

National Community Unification Formula (NCUF)¹ which is the only official South Korean unification formula is a suitable approach because of its focus on community building.

The thesis takes a national community perspective for unification, in that sense a method of integration is beneficial. Integration refers to the “process which resolves the active or latent conflicts stemming from cultural differences or cleavage (nation building)” and “political unification the process which unites divided political systems into a single body politic (state building)”. It is possible to achieve political unification without integration however this would result in internal conflicts and in the Korean case this would mean great conflicts emerging from two clashing societies (Shuja 2003: 69-70). The NCUF is against absorbing Pyongyang and aims for a gradual process that would result in unification. The engagement policies of Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun governments resulted in peaceful interactions and economic exchanges between two sides.

In 2008 the Lee Myung Bak government’s hardline North Korean policy ended the South Korean engagement policy which had lasted for 10 years because of the views of the Conservative party that it is not possible to realize reform in the North through the engagement policies. The engagement policy was in line with the first stage of NCUF; reconciliation and cooperation, but it failed after achieving results that seemed promising. The reason of its failure is closely linked with the NCUF and the security motivations of Pyongyang.

1.2 Structure

The analysis of the thesis will start with a section shortly explaining the methodology and the theoretical background. The reader might wonder why functionalism and neofunctionalism are explained briefly in the first part, but a much longer discussion is left for Wendt’s Social Theory of International Politics. The reason is that the latter is the main theory applied to the analysis, but the former two are the basis of the South Korean policies of economic integration that constitute the basic part of NCUF. I used most arguments of Wendt’s theory to imagine North Korea in the social system of states as an agent that both affects the system and is affected by it in return. However its domestic structure covers the major part of the analysis. After the explanation of the theory chapter 3 provides a brief summary of North Korean history, the NCUF and previous South Korean unification policies. In chapter 4 I

¹ NCUF and National Community Unification Formula are used interchangeably throughout the thesis

point out the two main shortcomings of NCUF that are related to the case study and link it to the discussion of Three Communities Initiative. Within this chapter Peace community and the threat of nuclear issue are explained in a historical timeline so that the reader could understand the policy of brinkmanship and nuclear obsession of Pyongyang.

The thesis will continue with a discussion of North Korean ideology historically based on *Juche* and *Songun*. In the analysis part I try to answer to what extent these two doctrines are influential in Pyongyang's national identity which shapes its interests and foreign policy.

2. Research Methodology and Theoretical Background

2.1 Research Methodology

According to Robert Yin “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” (Yin, 2003: 13). The contemporary phenomenon that is studied in this thesis is North Korea and its regime, it is difficult to think of a boundary between the domestic unit and the external context, Wendt's theory will also help to imagine this relation in a better way. Since it would be difficult to study the international context in deep (this would also alienate us from the focal point), the theory helps to give an adequate overview of the broad map and then helps us focus on the domestic factors in North Korea to answer our research question.

Miles and Huberman (1994 cited in Baxter 2008: 545) define “the case” as “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context. It is the unit of analysis”. The unit of analysis in this study is North Korea, although other questions are asked to define the context, the important task is to link it to the domestic factors, namely the identities and interests. The North Korean interests shape the decision making on military first politics which have a negative effect on the reconciliation process. Thus the main focus is the factors which affect the decision making.

Yin (2003: 22) asserts that the case study strategy is appropriate for “how” and “why” questions. Not only the main research question of this study is a “why” question, but also in order to answer it we need a “how” question such as “how should a community approach to reunification be” (the thesis refers to the Three Communities Initiative in order to answer this question). These questions help to collect the data that assist the reader to have an idea of the

context however as mentioned before, the main focus is given to the domestic facts because of their potential to answer the main question. This is related to the idea of “propositions” that help the researcher to look for the relative evidence (Yin 2003: 23).

The Research Questions:

1. Why has not the NCUF been achieved yet? (The main research question)
2. How should a community oriented Korean unification formula be formed?
3. How have the North Korean identities and interests affected the outcome of NCUF?

Propositions:

In the conclusion part I expect to find out that *Juche* and *Songun* shape a big part of national identity. There are two propositions:

1. The North Korean military politics which is the main reason behind the excessive militarization is embedded in North Korean identity and interests.
2. The main problem with the NCUF is that it prioritized economic community over peace community and this was not adequate to resolve the quagmire because of the first proposition.

There are many aspects that a researcher could focus on in order to answer the first research question; it is possible to find out problems arising from international actors in the process, the ones arising from a wrong implementation of the NCUF and so on. I try to find the answer in the North Korean regime; in other words its national identity which shapes its interests. In fact, other scholars have pointed out that the problem with the NCUF is that it does not prioritize the establishment of a peace community; because without solving the nuclear problem and achieving peaceful settlement it is difficult to reach true cooperation (Cho et al. 2011: 19).

Yin mentions six types of documentary information; documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, physical artifacts (Yin 2003: 86). Since this study is one which is mostly based on history, foreign policies and their analyses and studies related to North Korean system and values, it is based on literature review. Although it would be beneficial to conduct observatory methods on military-politics in North

Korea it is not possible given the circumstances which do not provide a safe environment for research.

One of the difficulties that this study faces is that the English translations of the literature on both South and North Korea is very limited, the fact that the researcher does not speak Korean language unfortunately limits the access to some information that could be fruitful for the thesis.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the thesis does not hold views against the North Korean political ideology or the politics of the regime; it only aims to explain why NCUF and North Korean interests are not compatible.

2.2 Theoretical Background

2.2.1 Functionalism and Neofunctionalism

Functionalism

According to David Mitrany's (1966 cited in Haas 1984: 51) functionalism political integration could not be created by the efforts of political actors because they would not desire to transfer their sovereignty to another institution. He claims that integration can be facilitated by non political international organizations, such as technical organizations to which sovereignty could be surrendered to some extent.

Mitrany claims that ideological and political conflicts cause problems in the process of integration. He argues that in order to reach international cooperation political and technical problems should be separated (Mitrany 1966 cited in Lim& Kwon 2006: 132). In such a way institutions could be created out of need in order to fix the technical problems (Mitrany 1975 in Lim& Kwon 2006: 132). Ernst B. Haas' (1964 cited in Lim& Kwon 2006: 132) emphasizes that political issues could not be separated from the technical issues in the integration process, because political decisions always shape the course of actions.

Neofunctionalism

Neofunctionalism is based on the work of Ernst B. Haas who tries to theoretically explain the regional integration processes and in this way create a grand theory of regional integration. Since economic and political integration was developed most in Europe neofunctionalists

focused more in European integration. Neofunctionalism is based on the idea that cooperation in one policy area would create changes in the related policy area as well finally this would result in further integration. This process of integration is considered to be automatic, however the weakness of this assumption is that in reality the process is altered by political actors (Cini, 2003).

Spillover is a neofunctionalist concept which is based on the idea that political cooperation sometimes faces obstacles and this brings the necessity to create new political goals in a related sector. There are three types of spillover; functional spillover is the result of situations which are technically linked to each other such as an economic cooperation that results in regulations in the working environment. Political spillover refers to the cases where policy areas are ideologically related to one another, such as package deals. Cultivated spillover refers to the situations where supranational actors bring up supranational agendas (Cini, 2003). According to Lindberg and Scheingold (1970 cited in Cini) although spillover results in political integration it is not the main concern of the states; their main concerns are economic and welfare goals, according to this view even the establishment of EU is an unintended result. Sunshine Policy separated economics from politics so that businesses could function independently (Chae 2002: 5). This is inspired from Mitrany's idea of separation, however in order for businesses to function independently North Korea should eliminate the control of the regime on centralized economy, since it rejected opening up itself the cooperation was limited. The inadequate amount of economic cooperation could not result in a spillover effect because the North selectively agreed to be involved in specific projects because it is reluctant to change (see Cho et al. 2011). This shows that change is necessary however it is not induced by economic cooperation at this level.

2.2.2. Social Theory of International Politics

Social Theory

The social theory of international politics is a social constructivist theory which defends the moderate version of constructivism which adopts a perspective based on "structural idealism". In his study Alexander Wendt lays emphasis on the cultural structures which have the principle role in constructing the identities and interests (Wendt 1999: 193).

Wendt uses the definition of constructivism which was first used by Nicholas Onuf (1989 cited in Wendt 1999), according to this definition it has two basic tenets: "1- the structure of

human associations are defined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, 2-the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these ideas rather than given by nature". Therefore it is an idealist social theory which opposes the materialist point of view because it does not accept that human relations are defined by material forces and points out the role of ideas. Moreover it is a "holist" or "structural" point of view in terms of that it does not reduce the social structures to individuals (Wendt 1999: 1).

Constructivism can be applied to any social form as long as actors (units of analysis) and structures (level) are defined clearly. A system cannot exist without its units, as human beings are the units that make up human society, states system cannot exist without states. In Wendt's analysis, the unit of analysis is defined as the states because they are the units whose choices make a difference in the international system, however he argues that there is much more than the actions of the state in the international system (Ibid: 194).

Wendt does not criticize the idea of international relations being state centric; because although non state actors are becoming more important this does not change the fact that the system change in the international system occurs through states (Ibid: 9). He also claims that there are some scholars who believe that considering states as agents which have human qualities such as rationality, interests is an example of anthropomorphization. However he does not see any problem with this since he believes that states are agents. Also he uses a "systems theory" approach as his theory deals with international politics rather than explaining the behavior of individual states, so it is a theory of international politics, not a theory of foreign policy (Ibid: 11).

Neorealism is a theory which suggests a positivist approach to explain international politics. In this sense it formulates a structural understanding of international relations, in other words it asserts that there is a structure which exogenously shapes the relation among states. Kenneth Waltz's Theory of International Politics which founds the basis of realism involves the ambition to come up with a theory which demonstrates how the units in the international system are affected by the so called structure. It is considered to be predictive because it holds some general concepts that explain the repetitions in history (Ben-Itzhak 2010: 311-319). The main difference of Wendt's systemic approach from that of Neorealism is that it does not separate the units from structure because Wendt thinks that the structure could not function without the agents. He aims to demonstrate how the agents are constructed by the system in a way that their effects are different (Wendt 1999: 12).

Wendt criticizes three main features of the structuralism of neorealism; individualism, materialism and neglect of interaction among states (Ibid: 17). Although most structuralists are holist in thinking, Kenneth Waltz is considered to be individualist in a way that he likens the international system to a market where individual firms compete. The structure (international system) eliminates the states fail if they do not perform well. According to Wendt the problem is that the theory does not pay attention to the constructions of agents, it rather has a top down point of view which explains the effect of the system. It does not look at what this structure is actually made of. This structure is defined by materialism, in other words what makes up the international system is the “distribution of material capabilities under anarchy” in this sense it is far from being a social theory and neglects the ideational relationships or characteristics that could become a part of the international society. According to Waltz there are two types of theorizing; unit level and system level; the states’ relations should be a part of unit level theorizing, Wendt argues that this is an approach which ignores the interaction among states (Waltz 1979, cited in Wendt 1999: 16).

Wendt mainly criticizes that Neorealism could not explain structural change, because according to the theory only a change in the system which are related to the distribution of power could be considered as structural. Wendt argues against this because social changes could also be structural (Wendt 1999: 20).

In sum, Waltz criticizes and amends the idea of international structure in Neorealism claiming that it is not composed of only material elements but also social elements which are related to the exchange of ideas. In this sense his theory has an idealist view of structure. In the system one of the three cultures of anarchy could be dominant; Hobbesian, Kantian or Lockean and the identities and interests are defined by the international system. Finally the theory holds a holist point of view; although most of the identity construction of states occurs at the domestic level, international system also contributes to its creation (Ibid: 21).

In terms of the theoretical debate on ideas, power and interest in the International Relations, Wendt argues that although power and interest are as important as ideas, their importance is defined by ideas based on their explanations. For example neorealists see multipolarity as an explanation of war and liberals might explain peace with economic interdependence, but according to Wendt the fact that states see each other as enemies or interdependent entities is defined by cultural forms. In other words, even the material beings are meaningful in the

cultural context that constitutes them. This does not mean that he underestimates the effect of material forces however he prioritizes the effects of how ideas are constructed (Ibid: 135-138).

Structure-Agency-Culture

The structure that Wendt emphasizes is made of three elements; material conditions, interests and ideas. These elements are considered as separate structures which affect each other; ideas define the interests, interests define the material conditions. According to the materialists material conditions should be given the priority in theorizing since they are considered to define the interests. On the other hand, idealists believe that the ideas determine the interests (Ibid: 140).

The idealist social theory takes for granted that people act towards objects, based on the meaning they assign with the object (Blumer 1962 cited in Wendt 1999: 140). As an actor acts on an object he also acts on a belief or “knowledge” as defined by Wendt. According to this definition knowledge is the idea that an actor believes to be correct. In this sense the belief that an actor considers another actor as an enemy is knowledge, and he is expected to act according to this knowledge. Wendt had emphasized the ideational structure of the international system as well as the importance of material forces. Its ideational aspect is defined as “distribution of knowledge” (Barnes 1988 cited in Wendt 1999: 140) which is composed of “ideational component of interests” and “general beliefs and expectations”.

Wendt defines two types of knowledge; private and shared. The former refers to the beliefs that belong to only one individual actor, this kind of belief is thought to result from ideological and domestic reasons. An individual state views the international issues, defines interests and its foreign policies in accordance with this private knowledge. Individual states act according to this “knowledge”. If individual states interact, “distribution of knowledge” replaces private knowledge and there might emerge a new “social structure of knowledge” which is a new system which is more than a sum of individual states (Wendt 1999: 141).

According to Waltz there are two levels of analysis for theories of world politics; the level of states is the unit level analysis which relates the explanations to the units, and the level of the international system deals with the structure of the system. Both levels explain the outcomes based on their own referent object (Waltz 1979 cited in Wendt 1999: 145). He criticizes the theories which merely focus on the properties of states and their interaction for being reductionist. Alexander Wendt has something to add in this matter, he does not agree with that

concentrating on “interaction” would make a theory reductionist since it is not possible to know the outcomes of interaction, they might be varieties of results. Waltz’s emphasis on the structure that he defines as one level structure, which is anarchy is also related to his critique about the reductionism of unit-level analysis. Wendt’s main critique on the anarchy concept is that the structure does not function according to anarchy logic because it is related to units, in other words the logic of the structure is defined by the units and their interaction. This does not create a reductionism because Wendt does not neglect the structure; he only argues that it is constructed by the units’ properties and interactions, both materially and ideally. Let us discuss how he analyzes the unit-structure relationship in two levels (Wendt 1999: 145-146).

Two Levels of Structure

There are two levels of structure in Wendt’s theory; the micro structure and the macro structure. The former refers to the structures of interaction, it is related to the standpoint of the agents, and the latter refers to the structure of outcomes which is related to the standpoint of the system. It is possible for a micro structural theory to explain the outcomes by looking at the interactions among units; states are units which are necessarily intentional. In other words they act according to purposes which affect the outcomes. States only interact when they “take each other into account” in the international system the outcomes are affected by the choices of each actor (Ibid: 147-148)

Whereas micro structural theory explains the behavior of the states, macro structural theory explains the “tendencies” within the system (Ibid: 149). The word “tendency” is a good choice to help understanding the issue, it highlights that the structure is not fixed however this does not mean that it is a sum of units or their interaction. There are tendencies which are continuously constructed within the international system and states are constituted by it based on the situation they are engaged in. Waltz’s understanding of macro-structure is a rigid one which is different from this definition of macro structure and the fact that neorealism does not try to explain the behavior of individual agents makes it impossible to think of a micro structure.

The macro level structures are continuously reconstructed by the interactions among the agents (Ibid: 150). In this sense it would be useful to imagine a map showing the macro level as the outer layer and the micro level as the inner layer of the system. These layers could not exist independently from one another.

Culture as Common and Collective Knowledge

As mentioned above, Wendt views the international system similarly to the social system of human beings, since states are seen as agents they are intentional and act based on the meaning they attach to material factors. A cultural system as the one in human society is also formed when those meanings are shared within the international system. In this case, private knowledge of one state could affect the foreign policy such as the “knowledge” of a state which believes that it is under military threat but this is different from the culture at the system level which is constructed as the sum of interactions between units, those meanings need to be shared meanings in order for them to create culture at this level. If the society is not constituted of shared meanings but of actors which take each other seriously and interact, then it is merely a social interaction (Ibid: 158).

The State

The social theory of international politics views states as unitary actors which have “desires beliefs and intentionality” like a human being. The idea of the state is like a “body” which could not be separated into parts however it is constituted by the state-society relationship (Ibid: 197). Wendt focuses on what he calls “the essential state” regardless of its political form because of his belief that all states have something in common.

Wendt’s understanding of state is one which cannot be considered independently from society since they are interdependent and if state is A, society is B and the nature of A and B are shaped by their interaction (Ibid: 199). Wendt (1999: 199) agrees with the Weberian understanding of the state in terms of its view of state as an organizational actor which has sovereignty. However his theory separates itself from Weberian theorists, when it comes to the nature of the state which Weberians argue to be independent from society.

Wendt’s theory of international politics thus bases itself on a Weberian ground in the sense that it analyzes state as the referent object (state-as-actor), but also adds that there is a relationship between the state and society which is affected by the “structure of political authority”(state as structure) by which state governs the society (state as society). In that sense neither state nor society can exist independently from one another, and they cannot exist independently from the political structure that constitutes them (Ibid: 200- 202).

Identity and Interests

Neorealism is criticized in Wendt's works as it sees the concept of self-help as a process which sets the terms for states' interaction without being affected by it. According to this point of view, self help is given exogenously by the anarchic structure to the process. Only the states which can adapt to this self help situation can survive, and since this involves only simple learning for adaptation, the complex learning which changes identity or interests is regarded as out of the question. Kenneth Waltz defines anarchy as a "permissive cause of war", it is a structure which results in war unless there is something to prevent it (Wendt, 1992).

Wendt claims that self-help is not a situation given by the structure but it is something that was constructed as the result of a process. He asserts: "Self help and power politics are institutions, not essential features of anarchy. "Anarchy is what states make of it." In this sense he separates the concepts of anarchy and self-help from one another. However he claims that self help and competitive power politics can occur as a result of interaction among states. Those interactions which are ignored by Waltz are mentioned as factors that lead states to become friends or foes, and how they view each other and themselves by Wendt (Ibid).

In building his theory, Wendt benefits from the principle that what defines people's interactions with an object is the meaning that an object has for them. Similarly, in a world with specific concrete facts, such as the distribution of power, there are no principles that define certainly how a state would act, or how one state views another. In this regard, understanding the terms identity, interest and institution would be fruitful for analyzing the behavior of the states within the international system (Ibid).

Wendt (224) defines identity as "a property of intentional actors that creates motivational and behavioral dispositions" or "relatively stable role-specific understandings and expectations about self" (Wendt, 1992). The identity mentioned here could refer to four types of identity; personal or corporate, type, role and collective identities. The identity which makes state a distinct entity is the personal identity, the other identities are built on it. Type identity gives the actor a label based on a shared characteristic however it does not need to be meaningful for other actors in the society, in terms of international society regime types could be considered as a type identity (Ibid: 226). Role identities are different from the type identity because they could not exist by themselves and they are based on the relationship with other

actors. In order to have a role identity the state has to have a position and a role which brings the specific kind of identity (Ibid: 227). A state might have many role specific identities which have been produced through the process of intersubjective meaning constructions. Defining a role identity is important for the state as it helps it to define its interest. Wendt gives the example of Cold War which consisted of conceptions of threat between the United States and Soviet Union, thanks to the identities that were constructed in relation to that perceived environment; both states were able to define their interests according to each situation (Wendt, 1992). Collective identity emerges as a result of mixing of Self and Other, two identities become a whole new identity (Turner et al. 1987 cited in Wendt 1999). It is constructed above the type identity because shared characteristics create type identity and if identification occurs, a collective identity is created (Wendt 1999: 229).

Whereas identity refers to who the actors are; interests are about what those actors are motivated to do in order to reproduce their identity. The former explains the state of existence and the latter partially explains the motivations behind their behavior. The behavior is also affected by how actors think they could reach their means in a specific situation. Identity and interest are interrelated because interest is based on identity. It is not possible for a state to make a decision without knowing its ambitions, and realizing its ambitions would be possible after knowing itself (Ibid: 231).

In a more detailed way, Wendt mentions two types of interest; an actor might have an objective interest which is not dependent on beliefs, but defining what should be done in order to realize an identity is largely dependent on the actor itself. Firstly, the actor should define its identity and internalize it, only after this phase it would be possible for the actor to act upon reproducing this identity. After internalizing the identity an actor would first try to understand its requirements, and secondly shape its behavior according to what is believed to be necessary. Wendt argues that the generation of behavior is affected not only by “desire” but also “belief”. In this sense he poses a formula: $D+B=A$, although desire is also a type of belief (even identity definition is based on belief), there is a distinction; D refers to “preferences over outcomes”. In other words desire is a “goal” rather than a means to reach the needs. Every identity requires “needs” from an actor, the goals which the actor thinks would help him realize these needs are called “subjective interest” or “desire” (D). Belief refers to how the actor thinks he could realize his desire and these two together lead to behavior (Ibid: 232).

National Interest

The interests of a state are difficult to define because they have a vague characteristic since they depend on many identities. States' interests might be based on corporate, role, type and collective identities. Wendt claims that all states have a national interest based on the corporate state identity; the national interest is unique to states and he mentions it as an objective interest because it is not based on the belief of the actor, it is rather a requirement which is objectively needed for reproducing the corporate identity, all the other identities of the states ought to be written over this identity (Ibid: 234).

According to Waltz (1979 cited in Wendt 1999), survival is the only national interest of a state, Wendt builds his argument on George and Keohane's (1980 cited in Wendt 1999) definitions and mentions four types of national interest; physical survival, autonomy, economic well being and collective self esteem and adds that these identities might be shaped according to the other identities of the states. Physical survival might depend on different things based on the time and space such as keeping the territory or secession. In order for a state to reproduce the corporate identity it should survive, exercise its autonomy, have economic well being and collective self esteem. The way that these identities are shaped also defines the interests and foreign policies of the states (Wendt 1999: 236-237).

Wendt addresses relatively stable set of identities and interests as "institution" In this way he sets the division between the structure that is mentioned by Waltz, and his own definition of institution, as something which is cognitive, affects the intersubjective actor. However it is not something fixed and unchangeable, it changes with knowledge and cognition but is not binding; unlike the self help principle that is defined in neorealism. They can be cooperative as well as conflictual, anarchy can set the rules as long as states perceive it so. If the identity of a state is constructed in relation to anarchy, it prioritizes security (Wendt, 1992).

Three Cultures of Anarchy

Theoretically it can be considered that anarchic structure might exist either in micro structures or macro structures, within the interaction based micro structures there might be a relationship based on anarchy, but this does not have to create a culture of anarchy at the macro level as neorealism asserts (Wendt 1999: 247). Alexander Wendt states "anarchy is nothing and nothings cannot be structures". It is not possible to talk about a logic of anarchy because anarchy is the "absence of rule" it is empty until they are given meaning by the actors that

construct the relationships. Rather than the anarchy which is emptiness, the culture of the anarchic system forms its structure (Ibid: 309). By rejecting the term “logic of anarchy” Wendt argues that at the macro level, the structures of anarchy could exist in different forms; he explains three types of ideal cultures which define whether the states would be enemies, rivals or friends; Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian (Ibid: 247). These cultures are based on relationships based on roles: enemy, rival and friend respectively. The thesis shall touch upon these structures and roles throughout the analysis.

Alexander Wendt’s Social Theory of International Politics would be fruitful in showing how states’ identities are constructed by domestic, international and transnational levels. In that sense, Social Theory of International Politics will be applied in order to demonstrate how the ideologies *Juche* and *Songun* shape the identities and interests of North Korea in relation to the Korean Unification issue. Wendt’s theory would be beneficial in understanding the intersubjective meaning construction that affects the military based politics which is based on self reliance principle of North Korea. In this way I hope that the analysis will be beneficial for understanding why the neofunctionalist formula of South Korea did not result in unification.

3. Historical Background

3.1 A Divided Korea

Korean people rightfully call the Korean peninsula as “the shrimp among whales”. Since it is geopolitically placed in the midst of struggling powers such as China, Japan and Russia the peninsula has faced many tragedies which can be roughly summarized as five occupations and about nine hundred invasions throughout its history (Chang 2006: 4). Choson dynasty ruled over the Korean Peninsula before the Japanese occupation which resulted from the Russo-Japanese war. The war which arose from the expansionist ambitions of these powers resulted in Japanese victory. As a result of the peaceful settlement which was initiated by the American president Theodore Roosevelt, Japan occupied Korea in 1905. Japanese colonial rule lasted until the end of the Second World War which resulted in Japanese surrender in 1945 (Ibid: 5).

In the beginning the division of Korean peninsula was a temporary solution; the United States had not decided on a plan about Korea and in order to prevent the Soviets from taking over all the peninsula it suggested its division and picked the 38th parallel as the occupation zone.

American supported Republic of Korea and Soviet supported Democratic People's Republic of Korea were both established in 1948 (Ibid: 6).

The Korean War was initiated by North Korean leader Kim Il Sung in 1950 in order to reunify the peninsula. North Korea could have been successful in its plan if it were not for the American-led coalition of United Nations which decided to use armed force to stop armed force for the first time in history. After three years and one month of war and negotiations which lasted more than two years, two Koreas agreed on a cease fire and no treaty has been signed to end the conflict until now (Ibid: 6-7). Only an armistice was signed by North Korea and People's Republic of China on one side and United States of America which represents 16 countries including South Korea. Although the South Korean forces were given to the command of United Nations, it has been under United States command until now (Young 2001: 7-8).

In sum, South and North Korea are still technically at war although they have achieved *de facto* peaceful existence since the June 15 2000 joint declaration which was brought about by the first inter-Korean summit. In order to achieve a peace regime and peaceful unification of Korean peninsula it is very important to resolve the current nuclear crisis (Kwak 2009: 44-46).

3.2 South Korean Reunification Policies and NCUF

The unification policies of both Koreas have changed significantly in time from an aggressive militant to more peaceful policies. In order to understand the reason why the NCUF has not been achieved it is fruitful to understand the unification policies coming after its adoption during Roh Tae Woo presidency which is a period the Korean relations changed into better.

The Special Declaration for National Unification and Prosperity (July 7 Declaration) which was made by president Roh Tae Woo on July 7 1988 defined North Korea as a member of the "same national community" for the first time in history and argued that the two sides should build reconciliation and cooperation (Lee 1994: 28). President Roh stated that during his presidency he would give top priority to peaceful unification (Young 2001: 10).

The July 7 declaration aimed to create "contact and reconciliation for unification, consolidation of mutual trust and building a favorable international atmosphere" (Choi 1992: 45). Roh Tae Woo defined the initiatives of the new regime as building dialogues between

South and North Korea and changing the competitive nature of the relations with cooperation and helping to enable North Korea's joining to the international society. President Roh's "Northern Policy" which was composed of many initiatives demonstrated a significant change in the South Korean policy towards Pyongyang. The administration established diplomatic ties with China in 1992 and Soviet Union in 1990 and North Korea normalized its relations with Japan and USA. This led to the dismantlement of the Cold War structure and facilitated the joining of South and North Korea to the UN in 1991 (Ibid: 41-43).

National Community Unification Formula

On September 11 1989 President Roh announced the "Unification Formula for the Korean National Community" which was a continuation of the previous initiatives, this formula would later become the model for the following unification policies (Young 2001: 9). This was the second Formula proposed in Korean history after Chun Doo Hwan's unification proposal. Unification Formula for the Korean National Community was based on the previous Formula for National Reconciliation and Democratic Unification and July 7 Declaration (Lee 1994: 28).

During the Roh administration the "Basic Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, Exchange and Cooperation" was signed in 1991, and "Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" in 1992. As a result of these agreements, both sides declared that they entered a "special interim relationship" that would proceed towards a peace treaty and reunification (Chang 2006: 100).

The main idea of the NCUF is that Korean people should build a national community before having political integration. According to this Formula, the loose union named the Korean Commonwealth would be the interim stage before unification (Shuja: 1994). The formula consists of three stages; confidence building and cooperation, confederation of the two Koreas and the establishment of a unified government (Young 2001: 10)

The first step of the formula is the establishment of an environment of exchange and cooperation which would lead to an inter-Korean summit that is based on mutual trust. In this summit the Korean National Community Charter which would be composed of non aggression arrangements and agreements for peace and unification is to be developed. In the second step Korean Commonwealth would be established as the transitory stage in order to establish further cooperation and mutual coexistence. In the third step, the Council of

Representatives in the Korean Commonwealth would draft the constitution of the unified Korea that would be drafted through democratic means. Finally general elections would be held in order to establish unified government and legislation system (Choi 1992: 45-46).

South Korea proposed that the Korean Commonwealth would be composed of: Council of Presidents as the highest decision making organ, Council of Representatives, Joint Secretariat and Council of Ministers as the executive organ. The Council of Ministers would be the executive body which would involve two prime ministers and cabinet officials. Moreover five committees would be established in order to deal with inter Korean confidence building, exchange and cooperation on different levels (Lee 1994: 30).

This formula argues that the South and North integration is necessary since reunification is expected to happen through the formation of one national community. The idea is that only after the national community is formed the political community could be established (Lee 1994: 32). Since the South wanted the North's cooperation, it wanted to form a well established dialogue between two countries. In this sense, South Korea defined some immediate aims such as persuading North Korea to stop its aims to spread communism in the South, eliminating the human rights violations of North Korea, persuading it to comply with previous agreements such as the "Basic Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, Exchange and Cooperation", and the "Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula". South Korea also claimed that it would be of economic and technological assistance if the North would engage in transparent and peaceful means of nuclear development (Ibid: 31).

However the issue of Nuclear Development restrained the efforts made by South Korean government. Although President Kim Young-sam also followed a policy of reconciliation with the North and prioritized the inter-Korean problems during his presidency his efforts did not receive a result as they were hindered by the first nuclear crisis in 1994 (Young 2001: 12).

The successor South Korean President Kim Dae Jung's Sunshine Policy was a plan that was adopted to make North Korea open itself to the outside world, this was likened to a metaphor from an episode of Aesop's Fables 'Wind and Sunshine' in which sunshine makes a traveler's coat come off (Lim& Kwon 2006: 130). The Sunhine Policy aimed to promote peace and cooperation through three principles "No armed provocation by the North will be tolerated, a takeover or absorption of the North will not be attempted, North-South reconciliation and

cooperation will be expanded beginning with those areas which can be most easily agreed upon.” (MOU 2003 cited in Lim& Kwon 2006: 133).

The Sunshine Policy theoretically derives from functionalism and neofunctionalism. It is mainly based on the idea that socio-economic exchanges with North Korea would bring peace between two sides (Lim& Kwon 2006: 131). Kim Dae Jung aimed to assist North Korea to become a part of the international world in the long run. He also believed that the policy would trigger North Korea to open up its economy, it was assumed that together with the increasing economic integration the two sides would benefit from each other’s economy, also the society would change in time with the economic advancement and this would facilitate the unification process (see Young 2001: 12 and Lim& Kwon 2006: 134).

The Sunshine Policy seemed promising in several ways in terms of triggering cooperation between the North and the South. The two sides engaged in projects such as reunions of separated families, Seoul- Sinuiju and Donghae railways between the countries, Gaesung Industrial Complex and most importantly the 2000 Korean Summit (Lim& Kwon 2006: 130). The historical Korean Summit led to the Joint Declaration on June 15 2000 which established the framework of *de facto* peaceful existence.

Since Roh Moo Hyun was inaugurated in 2003, his North Korean policy was directed by the Peace and Prosperity Policy which also contributed to the increase of peaceful interactions between the Koreas. Roh extended the Sunshine policy and followed a policy which aimed for peace in the peninsula and achieve prosperity in the Northeast Asia (Zhu 2007: 74).

The NCUF has been the official unification formula of Seoul since the Kim Young Sam government, it was officially adopted in 1994 and still functions as the framework for the policies of each government (see Cho et al. 2011). However the following governments’ policy proposals slightly differ from it, for example Kim Dae Jung proposed a federal system as a second stage after the first stage; commonwealth. However both Kim and Roh pursued engagement policies which were in line with the first stage of NCUF. Therefore they did not shift from the main unification policy. The South Korean engagement policy has stayed on the first stage of NCUF; reconciliation and cooperation and could not go further. During this stage the foreign policy was oriented towards creating the economic, social/cultural and political communities however the first stage of NCUF has only been fulfilled in terms of contributing to the creation of economic and social/cultural community to some extent.

Korean relations changed dramatically when the Lee Myung Bak government took power in 2008. The new conservative government decided to follow a policy that declared the engagement policies of the previous two governments as a failure because not only they were not able to create reform in the North but also they strengthened its military capability and its “military first policy” (Moon 2011: 1-3). Lee’s policy aimed to strengthen the alliance with USA and make the relations with North Korea conditional (Shin& Burke 2008: 287). The exchange and cooperation between two Koreas was suspended nevertheless this resulted in the increase of military conflicts. The North Korean missile and nuclear tests, the sinking of Cheonan South Korean navy ship and the attack on Yeonpyong Island are the tensions that happened during Lee’s presidency. As a result the government’s policies strengthened the North’s perception of South as an enemy (Ibid).

4. Unification through Communities

Unification could happen either by peaceful purposes and negotiation or through force. There are three scenarios for the unification by coercive means. The first of them is a scenario which deals with the economic collapse of North Korea; in that case South Korea would have to deal with the ruins of North Korea and take care of the problems it brings. The second scenario is about the possibility of break of war as a result of a North Korean reaction to its collapse; it might also be the case that North Korea would start a war as a reaction to foreign intervention in such a situation. Finally this might result in a reunification through North Korean aggression over South Korea. The third scenario is a US-led military intervention that would lead to a regime change, this would also make South Korea have to absorb North Korean part which is a real burden (Olsen 2005: 164).

It is very important to bring solutions that could result in cooperation and peaceful unification in order to prevent the above scenarios from taking place in the future. The aim of this thesis is looking at what is necessary in the process leading to a peaceful Korean unification in general, rather than focusing too much on the unification scenarios. I argue that only by finding out what is necessary, it would be possible to find out what was lacking in the National Community Unification Formula. Studying NCUF might be fruitful in terms of supplementing it in the future. The answers to the question about what is necessary for peaceful unification are mainly inspired by Korea Institute for National Unification’s analysis of the Three Stage Unification Scheme (Three Communities Initiative) of the Lee Myung Bak government, which is an amendment to NCUF.

In order to understand why the South Korean formula has not succeeded it is necessary to look at the issues between the two Koreas that have hindered the reunification until now and the problems with the NCUF together from a broad perspective.

Both NCUF and Three Communities Initiative take a community oriented approach (see Cho et. al. 2011). There are several obstacles that should be tackled during the process of establishing a national community. The aim of thesis is not giving an explanation how they could be tackled, but it is beneficial to see what is necessary to overcome for unification so that one could understand why a community oriented approach could work.

NCUF's Shortcomings

The aim of a unification formula is to provide a blueprint for cooperation reconciliation and integration at different levels. In order for a Korean reunification formula to reach its aims the above mentioned inter-Korean problems should be solved. There might be several other problems with the structure of the NCUF however I plan to focus on only two of them because of their relevancy to my analysis; these are the problems with the national community theory, especially the priority issue, and the functionalist unification theory which could be very successful in other cases like European integration but unfortunately cannot serve as an adequate theoretical basis when it comes to its implementation in the Korean case (see Cho et al.: 2011).

NCUF was mainly based on functionalism and it focused on economic exchange and cooperation as it was presumed that economic cooperation would lead to cooperation in the areas of political and security. Probably one of the most important issues which have prevailed between the two Koreas is the peace settlement issue which has not been resolved by the NCUF. NCUF is based on low politics however this clashes North Korean understanding of international relation which prioritizes high politics; North Korea gives priority to its nuclear program because of its military first politics, thus a policy which did not focus on denuclearizing North Korea at first place and establishing a peace regime could not be successful in reaching its ends (Cho et al. 2011: 12). Thus in a unification plan it would be plausible to give the priority on establishment of the peace community because as the history shows it would be difficult to form a peace regime and lead towards unification without achieving denuclearization and peaceful settlement (Ibid: 19). Probably the most important reason that NCUF did not lead to unification is the North Korean perception of international

politics which makes it necessary to focus on the establishment of a peace community first. An analysis of the ideology of Pyongyang would contribute to understanding why peace community should be given priority in a future unification formula.

The main aim of this thesis is to look at the first of the above mentioned weaknesses of the NCUF, namely the problem regarding the functionalist logic and the peace settlement issue. Probably the most important problem with the NCUF was that it neglected the North Korean understanding of international relations which is based on two ideologies of self reliance (*Juche*) and military first politics (*Songun*). Before creating a unification strategy it would be fruitful to take into account the North Korean understanding of international relations which is the result of these ideologies.

Community is defined as “a group of people who have certain beliefs about and attitudes toward one another that differentiate it from groups that lack those attitudes and beliefs” (Casinelli 1969: 16). NCUF ranks the national community as the top level and “national community” is divided into three sub-levels of economic community, political community and social/cultural community. The Three Communities Initiative introduces the Peace Community because of the belief that NCUF has neglected the fact that establishing peace is the most important phase before the national community is established. In this sense it mentions three types of communities; national community at the top level, and peace community and economic community at the lower level (Cho et al. 2011: 18).

The most important issue here is the priority given to these communities because they define the policies of the governments and the results are mainly based on the priority. NCUF gave priority to the economic community followed by social/cultural community and then the political community. The idea behind this was the same with the idea behind the European Integration. It was assumed that economic integration would later spread to political integration. On the other hand, Three Communities initiative gives the priority to peace community which is followed by economic community and national community (Cho et al 2011: 19). NCUF was based on the simultaneous implementation principle; it assumed that the political community would be built after economic and social/cultural communities would succeed but the tasks regarding each area would be fulfilled simultaneously. However neither economic nor cultural communities were created. The Three Communities Initiative proposes that once peace community is established, the establishment of economic community would proceed and the national community would be formed based on them (Ibid: 21).

In the following chapters I look at the three communities that are mentioned in the Three Communities Initiative, and mention the obstacles against establishing those community types in order to provide a broader picture.

4.1 Peace Community

According to the Johan Galtung (1996 cited in Kwak 2009: 45) there are two types of peace; negative peace refers to the absence of war, and positive peace which refers to resolving international conflict through a peaceful way. It could be said that the peace regime which should be formed in the Korean peninsula should be based on positive peace because the absence of *de facto* war is not enough to form a peace regime. In spite of the armistice agreement that ended the Korean War in 1953, a peace regime has not yet been established in the peninsula. In other words, although there has been a *de facto* peace after the Joint Declaration was signed in 2000, a legal or institutional regime has not been achieved, which means that the Korean peninsula is still at war (Kwak 2005: 148-152).

A Korean peace regime could be formed through several steps; Firstly, the Korean armistice agreement should be replaced with a Korean peace treaty, secondly an arms-control agreement should be signed between the Koreas, and thirdly a legal and institutional peace regime should be guaranteed at the international level. (Kwak 2009: 46).

There are some problems that slow down the process leading to the establishment of the peace regime (Ibid). Firstly, there has been a mutual distrust and a relationship based on deterrence between the two Koreas. The DMZ where over one million troops on two sides are deployed is a proof of this hostile environment. Secondly the two sides are in disagreement about the way the peace regime should be established. North Korea insists that South Korea and USA alliance is dismantled and the USA troops leave the peninsula. However South Korea aims for a peaceful resolution of the nuclear problem, its North Korean policy has been oriented to create an inter-Korean cooperation.

4.1.1 North Korea's Nuclear Program

Probably the biggest obstacle to the establishment of a peace regime in the peninsula is the nuclear program of North Korea. Throughout the history Pyongyang has used its nuclear program for negotiation with great powers in exchange for assistance, although gaining economic help is not the sole purpose behind its nuclear ambitions. North Korea claimed to

have nuclear weapons in 2005, has been conducting tests since 2006, and is considered as a threat to the global community (Kim 2011: 249).

North Korean nuclear program and the events before and after the signing of the Agreed Framework carry significance for a researcher who wants to understand the North Korean motivations and the factors that have been blocking the peaceful settlement in the peninsula.

The obsession of North Korea for nuclear weapons dates back to 1950's. Soviet Union assisted North Korea in 1956 by handing them nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and in 1960's they helped them to build a research reactor in Yongbyon. The agreements for nuclear research cooperation between the Soviet Union and North Korea also led North Korean personnel to be thought nuclear physics in Soviet Union. In 1977 North Korea allowed International Atomic Agency inspections in return for uranium (Chang 2006: 23).

In 1985 Soviet Union persuaded Kim Il Sung to sign Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in return for reactors which it declared off after a while. North Korea started constructing a second reactor in 1979 and caused a stir by not signing a safeguards agreement with IAEA and not allowing the inspectors in (Ibid: 24). This showed that North Korea signed the NPT treaty so that it could get assistance from IAEA and Soviet Union, and in the long run build nuclear weapons with the assistance it would have been provided with for peaceful purposes.

North Korea later revealed that it would not allow inspections unless USA withdraws its nuclear weapons from South Korea. Unites States withdrew its nuclear weapons in 1991 and guaranteed that it would not use nuclear weapons on non-nuclear countries. This led to an agreement between the South and the North according to which the two sides would not possess or develop nuclear weapons and would conduct mutual inspections; North Korea finally signed the IAEA safeguards agreement in 1992 (Ibid: 25).

However North Korea did not know much about IAEA's inspection abilities and tried to deceive them about Yongbyon and the plutonium development there, when their nuclear program was revealed Pyongyang decided to withdraw from the NPT but suspended it in return for diplomatic recognition from the USA in 1993 (Ibid: 26). It was not possible to persuade North Korea for compliance anyway, soon afterwards in 1994 North Korea withdrew from IAEA which made the US decide on sanctions. This created a conflict which almost led to war between North Korea and the USA because Pyongyang stated that sanctions

meant war (Ibid: 27). During that conflict a North Korean official warned that if a military force was used against Pyongyang, this would mean “plunging the whole Korean peninsula into flames of war” (Kalpana 1999: 1307). Nevertheless the conflict was solved thanks to Jimmy Carter’s negotiation with Kim Il Sung, as a result Pyongyang was persuaded to hold “the first inter-Korean summit” on July 25-27 1994 however the summit did not take place since Kim Il Sung passed away (Young 2001: 11).

Meanwhile the bilateral negotiations between the USA and North Korea resulted in Geneva Agreed Framework in 1994; by signing the Agreed Framework North Korea guaranteed that it would freeze its nuclear program, stay loyal to NPT, IAEA and 1991 Agreement with Seoul and United States promised to deliver 500.000 tons of fuel oil each year until the two light water reactors would be built (Lee cited in Habib 2011: 53).

The North Korean policy of brinkmanship worked well until the Bush administration; after September 11 events George W. Bush included North Korea in the Axis of Evil and the relations between the two countries were disconcerted. North Korea started a new crisis in 2002 by expelling IAEA inspectors and withdrawing from the NPT (Chang 2006: 40). Although it possessed the uranium program and by this it was defying the 1994 Agreed Framework, Pyongyang was stubborn in demanding aid in return for fulfilling its obligations. North Korea’s premise was that the USA had not kept its promise that it gave in 1994 about the light water reactors. USA on the other hand was rejecting to help unless North Korea halted its program (Ibid: 41).

Finally six-party talks were established between the USA, China, Russia, Japan, South Korea and North Korea in 2003 in the hope of providing a solution to the nuclear crisis. Six rounds of talks took place from August 2003 to April 2009 (Habib 2011: 44). The Kim regime which was once more neglected by the USA during these negotiations grew aggressive in terms of giving more weight to its plutonium program. Condoleezza Rice’s soft approach towards North Korea suspended US negligence, and in 2005 North Korea promised to give up its nuclear programs, join the NPT and submit to IAEA safeguards agreement and the South and North readmitted the 1991 denuclearization agreement, North Korea accepted to pursue a peaceful relationship with the USA and Japan. The six parties claimed that they would have economic cooperation and agreed to provide energy support to North Korea (Chang 2006: 43)

In the 2005 Joint Statement the five parties expressed that after North Korea is fully disarmed they would provide a light water reactor, however Pyongyang insisted that it should be provided with the reactor before it gives up its weapons and threatened the USA with nuclear war again (Chang 2006: 44).

In the 2007 nuclear freeze agreement signed in the Six Party talks it was decided that 1 million tons of fuel oil would be given to North Korea by the participant states in exchange for shutting down its reactors. At the end of 2008, North Korea had received the half of this amount after shutting down its reactors temporarily and reached its aims (Manyin and Nikitin cited in Habib 2011: 53). After the September 19 agreement was signed in 2008 the nuclear programme of Pyongyang had been improved into the stage of nuclear deterrent in technical terms, and reducing the nuclear capabilities did not seem engaging to the North Korean regime. Thus it made a new plan for economic survival and decided to revive the *Chollima* movement and turn North Korea into a prosperous country by 2012 (Toloraya 2009 cited in Habib 2011: 55). Subsequently it reactivated its nuclear facilities, launched a rocket which was meaningful in terms of national pride and conducted its second nuclear test in 2009 in order to show the national power as a means of propaganda against South Korea and other international actors.

From the beginning until 2012 North Korea has maintained a policy of brinkmanship which has used its nuclear program as a bargaining chip to gain economic aid, The threat from North Korea has not caused any war however the states have not been able to put the international system in jeopardy, thus they have responded the policy of brinkmanship by answering North Korean demands (Cha cited in Habib 2011: 55).

4.2 Economic Community

4.2.1 Inter-Korean Economic Interactions

South and North Korean relations have been mostly driven by the economic relations in spite of limitations. The economic relations between the South and the North began in 1988 with the “South-North Economic Openness Step” of the Roh Tae Woo government which prepared the grounds for inter-Korean trade. This was later followed by the “Act on Exchanges and Collaboration between South and North Korea” which was prepared by South Korea and prepared the legal basis of the inter-Korean trade. The economic relations were later grounded on the “Basic Agreement” which was signed between Pyongyang and Seoul in 1991. Kim

Young-Sam government also adopted policies which led to the improvement of economic relations (Lim 2009: 188).

The economic relations are considered to have improved mainly as a result of the engagement policies of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun governments (Ibid: 181). South Korean unification policies such as the Sunshine Policy reflect the emphasis given to the establishment of an economic community by increasing economic interaction in the peninsula. The aim of the NCUF was to ameliorate the relations and prepare the grounds for a summit between the Koreans. Sunshine Policy contributed to the inter-Korean relations by increasing the trade volume, diversifying trade structures and and it also led the way to the 2000 Korean Summit and 2000 Joint Declaration. The results seemed very promising for creating peace and reunification in the long term (Lim& Kwon: 2006).

As a result of the 2000 Joint Declaration the two sides decided to allow family exchange visits on August 15 National Liberation Day and also increase exchange in other fields such as cultural, sports and health (USIP: 2000). South and North Korean trade performance changed after 2000 going through an adjustment period first and increasing continuously. The trade between the countries was legalized in 1988 and improved until 2008. After 1988 exports from South Korea remained larger than South Korean imports until 2007 and after 2005 the trade volume increased (Lim, 2009: 183). The main reason for this increase is the large amount of export from Seoul to Pyongyang for the construction of the Gaesung Industrial Complex in 1998 under Kim Dae Jung government. The work in the Gaesung Industrial Complex was directed by the South Korean firms which moved there for production activities (Ibid: 184-185).

The railway lines provided transportation to and from the Gaesung Complex and also Mt. Geumgan in North Korea. South Korean tourists were able to travel to Mt. Geumgan from 2003 (Ibid: 187). As a result of these projects that increased the interaction there was an increase in KEDO's heavy oil support, export and humanitarian aid to North Korea. However the fruitful results of the projects were temporary; the touristic interaction was suspended by South Korea in 2008 since a South Korean tourist was killed by a North Korean soldier (Ibid: 184-186). In addition in 2010 the economic ties were deeply damaged because of North Korea's Cheonan and Yeonpyong attacks and taking control over five Hyundai owned properties at Mt. Geumgan showing the suspension of the tourism activities as an excuse (US

Department of State). These examples show that unless the tension between the counties ends and a state of peaceful coexistence is reached, such economic interaction is doomed to failure.

Another factor that makes it difficult to establish economic community is the lack of international organization; without the assistance of an international organization it is a hard task to have increased economic interaction in the Korean Peninsula and it is difficult to trigger integration without a supranational organization like ECSC (see Cho et al. 2011). The best example is that European integration that happened through three organizations which merged later. Although the effects of ECSC in increasing trade were low it provided an institutional framework for political decision making (Gillingham 1991 cited in Rittberger& Glockner 2010).

4.3 National Community

The different political ideologies and cultural discrepancies in the Korean Peninsula are some of the issues which make integration difficult in the Korean Peninsula (Lim& Kwon 2006: 133). Haas's explanation about the four arenas of interaction could help to understand why the integration is difficult in the Korean peninsula.

According to Haas there are four arenas for international interaction that could facilitate integration; political, economic, cultural and social interaction which could occur formally or informally (Haas 1984: 56) Haas asserts that high degree of low-level (increased contact between states) informal contact could make high-level integration (political unification) possible, in other words governments should decide to cooperate so that the informal contact (economic and touristic interaction) increases (Ibid: 55) This might be possible in many democratic countries however North Korea is a closed society, it is not possible for its citizens to have a high amount of informal contact such as travelling to South Korea although it is possible to have a specific amount of economic interaction. In order to form social interaction South Korean governments conducted campaigns such as family reunions, nevertheless this kind of efforts could only function as a means to soften the bitter relationship for a while. There is another aspect that is mentioned by Haas (Ibid) in terms of the divided families and the national view regarding the unification issue; he foresees that the new generation in Korea might not favor reunification as the old generation did because of being separated from their families.

It is not surprising that a territorial separation of more than half a century has brought ideological and cultural separation between the peoples of two Koreas. The cultural differences mainly stem from different ways of socioeconomic development and the exposure to different foreign cultures and languages. The differences in language were so big that even the unions between family members from each parts of the peninsula resulted in problems in communication between the sides since the South and North had naturally evolved different vocabularies. Certainly, the differences are not limited to linguistics; stereotypes between two sides have evolved as well, for example The North Koreans view themselves as more resilient whereas South Koreans see themselves as sophisticated and civilized in comparison to the Northern (Olsen 2005 :154). Thus in order for Korean unification to happen reducing the cultural divisions and developing a cultural unity is a necessary means. If an atmosphere of mutual confidence is built between the two people it would be easier for them to engage in dialogues in terms of political and economic activities (Ibid: 155).

In sum cultural and social interaction is very difficult to achieve between the two societies and because of the political problems, economic interaction is often stagnated and also is not adequate by itself to lead to political integration. Therefore it is necessary to build the peace community first and if it is followed by the economic community and national community it would be possible to reach the standards for unification.

5. North Korean Political System

North Korean can be considered as a monarchy which is governed by a single man. The government uses ideology in order to mobilize the people; its propaganda is based on the “achievement of steel like unity”, the persuasive techniques that the regime uses can be associated with communism. It is a political system in which rewards and punishments are clearly defined in order to make people react in a way that the government desires. In terms of economy, it is a command economy which still follows the Soviet model with slight modifications (Scalapino 1972: 64).

5.1 Political Leadership

The current DPRK regime is governed by the people who participated in the anti-Japanese movement in Manchuria. These people retreated to Soviet Union and in 1940's, at the end of the World War II they returned to Korea with the Red Army. The ones who survived were the people who acquired positions in the political party. Kim Il Sung who was one of those

guerillas was the head of a Manchurian guerilla band in the 1930's. Kim Il Sung's faction of the party is the only faction that remained since he was able to remove his opponents (Ibid: 65).

In North Korea the Great Leaders are considered as divine beings and it would be appropriate to say that they are worshipped by the North Korean society. The Great Leader Kim Il Sung is believed to be the Father God and his son Kim Jong Il is believed to be the Son of God like Jesus in Christianity. North Korean society is one that believes the idea that their purpose in life is glorifying the Great Leaders. This absolute belief in the leader builds the basis of North Korean regime (Kim 2008: 22).

According to North Koreans a new era started with the birth of Kim Il Sung, so they based the calendar on the date of his birth. Cultural festivals, events and even international festivals are usually organized on his birthday, April 15. His birthday is celebrated as the festival of the sun since he is likened to the sun which is the giver of life on earth. The citizens are supposed to wear his badge to show that they are his guardians and at the same time remind them that the Great Leader is always with them (Ibid).

The aim of the North Korean policies is directed towards creating these ideas and beliefs in the society. Each individual is a member of a political organization which is supervised by the Korean Worker's Party based on their gender, profession and age. The political organization basically aims to guarantee the loyalty to the party and its ideology. There are weekly meetings in which people engage in mandatory criticism for themselves and each other. The indoctrination of the Great Leader's ideology beginning at a young age in all classes including mathematics is also another pillar that keeps the regime stable. Moreover the fact that North Korean society is isolated from the world and everything that globalization brings, and that the government strictly controls the TV channels and radio stations make it impossible for the North Korean Society to think outside the box and adopt the ideology that is externally presented to them. Furthermore these people are punished by being sent to political prisons or to exile if it is found out that they spoke against the Great Leader (Ibid: 24).

The *Juche* and *Songun* ideologies were built in this kind of society, so they form the unshakeable basis of the North Korean regime. In order to fully understand upon which principles the politics and society functions and in order to give a meaning to the North Korean understanding of international system it is crucial to understand those two ideologies.

Unfortunately the academic material *Songun* is quite limited; however Han S. Park's study in North Korea is valuable in understanding *Songun* doctrine, Park argues that it is difficult to understand *Songun* because it is still being formed and it does not have a perfect definition. However theoreticians in this field would help to understand the theoretical background and characteristics. (Park 2007: 7).

One might say that since the priority North Korea gives to its nuclear program and extreme militarization the discussion of the thesis should be more related to *Songun* politics, however *Juche* and *Songun* are intertwined because the latter is based on the principles of former (Ibid: 1). Moreover the lack of North Korean cooperation with Seoul in other areas could be explained with *Juche* as well.

5.2 *Juche Sasang*

The reasons behind the creation of *Juche* ideology (*Juche Sasang*) are embedded in North Korean history. After Stalin's death an opposing trend against communist rule arose; in order to protect North Korea from being affected by such an opposing trend and maintain his rule Kim Il Sung created the *Juche* ideology which means "self reliance". In this way he rejected the ideology and trends in the Soviet Union (Kim 2008: 24). *Juche* is also a response from Kim Il Sung towards the "imperialism" of the USA and its troops in South Korea. At the beginning it was adopted as an ideology against the foreign domination, to protect the nation from it and declare the self reliance. In fact, the main idea which *Juche* is based on is military self-defense. Kim Il Sung's quote "a soldier without a gun is a straw man" reflects this emphasis (Park 2007: 4).

The Principles of *Juche*

The Idea of Self-Reliance

According to Kim Il Sung, *Juche* could be seen as an adaptation of Marxism and Leninism on North Korea. However Cumings (1993 cited in Habib 2011: 58) claims that *Juche* refers to national pride or giving priority to the Korean nation. Although *Juche* means "self-reliance", it is an ideology which highlights the importance of self-sufficiency, rather than carrying an isolationist meaning. It is rather about not needing external help and being able to rely on the internal resources. (Habib 2011: 58).

The Body Politics

According to the *Juche* ideology, the Great Leader is the brain of the society and the people are the other parts of this body. The Great Leader is considered as the ruler (the state) which the other parts of the body are dependent on. The aim of the Great Leader is “to govern North Korea based on the *Juche* ideology, reunifying the Korean Peninsula under his rule, and governing the world with *Juche* ideology.” (Kim 2008: 24).

Juche teaches to the people that there are two types of life; biological and political. Whereas the biological life ends one day, the political life is never ending, only through devotion to the political life it would be possible for the people to gain some type of immortality (Ibid). According to this understanding the development of the individual being in terms of political consciousness is deemed to be important. The concept of “political-social body” expresses that an individual transforms from a biological body to a social one; the former is a body which has physical desires and the latter has a social and political consciousness (*Eusiksong*) (Park 2007: 3).

According to *Juche* there is a struggle between the imperial forces and North Korea which is not only a material one but also an ideological one. The ideological struggle is considered to be more important (Myeong-nam cited in Woo 2011: 193). It is also important to note that the frequent use of the term “revolutionary struggle” refers to protecting the nation from foreign imperial forces and unifying the Korean Peninsula, it does not mean there should be a classless society like in Marxism (Park 2007: 4).

5.3 *Songun* (Military Politics)

Songun politics was put forward by Kim Jong Il under the new constitution which was drafted in 1998. The constitution declares the National Defense Commission as the base of political authority and power (Ibid: 6). *Songun* Politics introduced a new North Korea which should be strong economically, militarily and in terms of political ideology. Nuclear capability especially carried great significance (Habib 2011: 58).

The philosophy of *Songun* is similar to *Juche*'s philosophy of political body in the sense that it promotes the development of the individual. However it argues that it should be created from three elements; a person should develop his body with engaging himself in martial arts

(body), he should be educated in arts and sciences (mind) and devote himself to a mission (spirit) (Park 2007: 3). Park defines the main characteristics of the military-politics as below:

Military as the Guardian of the Body

As mentioned above, the political system is likened to a body in North Korea, all the parts of the body need to be protected from outside threats. In this regard military is thought to be the guardian of this body; this perception actually provides a perspective to the analysis because if military is seen as the guardian of this body, it should be prioritized under any circumstances. It should be protected and should never be weakened. Military is not only a self defense tool which protects the country but it is also the main feature of politics, it is the brain together with the leader and it is even above the political party, it is the decision making body which arranges the policies and sends them to other organizations for implementation (Ibid: 1).

Military as the Provider

Military not only provides security but also foods and services; it is the task of the military to engage in some farming tasks such as preparing the soil and harvesting, also they carry food to civilians. Since the money which is earned from the exports of weapons goes to the military, it is the main body which is supposed to share those revenues with the people (Ibid: 2). In this regard one could infer from this situation that civilians are dependent on the military in terms of foods and services.

Military as the Problem Solver

The problems that civilians come across in their daily routines are also solved by the military personnel; the *Songun* society functions under the principle “no problem is too big or too small for the military to solve”. Military functions as a repairman or the unit for people to consult (Ibid: 2).

In the *Songun* society military has the task of being the leader or visionary for the society, the North Korean people believe that they should follow the ideology and political aims that are thought to them by the military. In this sense another mission of the military is “social engineering”; directing the society to where it should go, in other words preparing it to take part in the “revolutionary struggle”. The *Songun* philosophy is also thought in schools, the central body of education in North Korea is the Military University which is the core of

Songun ideology that trains the military officials. The other educational institutions are also affected by its philosophy (Ibid).

The North Korean culture is quite homogeneous; there is no cultural gap between the generations as in other societies. The role of the military in maintaining the cultural system of the society is notable. Since the compulsory military service is ten years in North Korea, there is a strong relationship between the military and each family. Since it constitutes an important part of the daily life, and it is embedded in the civilian society itself each individual must feel like a part of the military, moreover they believe that military is always right in directing the society, this puts military into the center of culture. Among the substantial traits of this *Songun* culture are; uniformity, obedience to authority, a definition of enemy and determination. Surprisingly equality is another feature of this culture; although the Supreme Leader's office is separated from the decision making the citizens are involved in, there are weekly meetings for the administrative units (*ban*) of the society. As also mentioned above, these meetings are characterized by the confessions of the members and recommendations to them, and the discussions of the information which comes from the center (Ibid: 3).

The Principles of Songun Doctrine

According to K. P. Chon (cited in Park 2007: 6), the principles that *Songun* is based on are defined as below:

1. Every soldier in the military is expected to be loyal to the *Soryong* which means the "supreme commander" and refers to the Great Leader Kim Il Sung.
2. Military should succeed in every goal at all costs
3. The best characteristic of a soldier is that he sacrifices himself for the well being of the nation.
4. An individual does not carry a meaning when he is not part of a group, the individuals and the group exist for each other
5. Discipline is the most important part of education and practice
6. Unity and solidarity of the nation cannot be given up.
7. The "four virtues of the people's army" are "patriotism, care for the people, love of the nation and the devotion to *Soryong*"

There are several doctrines that *Songun* politics puts forward in order to be applied to foreign policy (Park 2007: 7): the first principle is noteworthy in terms of showing the linkage of military power and foreign policy; “foreign policy works when it is accompanied by the barrel of a gun”. This reflects an understanding which is compatible with the self-help principle, *Songun* doctrine necessitates that North Korea perceives the international society as an institution of self help and the only way it can survive in this system is through the maximization of its military capability. In this context the ideology involves the so-called “progressive” who are the people who take North Korea’s defiance of USA as an example, and adopt “progressive” ideologies. The application of the *Songun* doctrine in foreign policy is mainly related to the struggle of North Korea and the likes that are expected to unite with it, against the imperial powers.

6. Analysis

The main argument of the thesis is built around the assumption that the main obstacle for peaceful South Korean led reunification is that the peaceful coexistence has not been established and this has been related to the nuclear ambitions of North Korean regime. In this sense it might be considered to be reductionist at first glance; however this study does not neglect the other obstacles in the process, arising from other factors.

This theory has been chosen because of its emphasis on the effect of identities and interests of actors on their behavior. Although the theory has a holistic nature which explains the system and does not deal with the components within the units and accepts the states as unitary referent objects because it would have been difficult for Wendt to link the components of the state to system, this does not mean that it neglects the identities and interests and the fact that they are to a significant extent shaped by domestic factors. Based on this idea, this study focuses more on the domestic factors which have shaped the identity of North Korea which shapes its foreign policy behavior regarding military politics and its nuclear ambitions which is related to it.

As previously explained, Wendt’s theory defines states as the units and the level of analysis is the international system. Within this context the first thing to do would be defining which type/types of identity of North Korea affect(s) its behavior related to its military first politics, and later its interests which arise from this identity should be defined, finally the analysis should be concluded by explaining the relationship between the domestic factors and the

system, in other words; the interaction between South and North Korea regarding the South Korean unification formula.

It would not be wise to say that all the identities that North Korea adopts are solely a result of domestic politics since however closed a state may be, its identity and interests are affected by the international system. However, there are many identities that North Korea could adopt as a state could have corporate identity, role identities, collective identities and type identities which are defined in accordance with different contexts in time and space. The thesis looks at how those identities are shaped by the *Songun* and *Juche* doctrines.

As pointed out earlier, the mainstream international relations theory is dominated by Theory of International Relations of Kenneth Waltz which is based on individualism and classical realist materialism. Neoliberalism which arose as an opposition to Neorealism accepts individualism however it points out the significance of international institutions in amending the effects of power and interest (Keohane 1984 cited in Wendt 1999: 3).

Alexander Wendt criticizes the theories which try to explain the outcomes by reference to agents, because they ignore the level of states interaction (which he calls micro level) and also the macro level, they try to explain the outcomes domestically, inside-out. In other words these theories assume that states are autistic, they do not interact with other states (see Wendt 1999). Although it can be claimed that North Korea is similar to this definition, it is not affected by the outcomes of globalization and it is closed to cultural and ideological interaction with other states, this may not be adequate to put it into the category of autistic state since it does interact politically with other states although it is resistant to change. In this sense it is possible to relate Wendt's theory to the case and view it within the two structures mentioned in the theory.

6.1 North Korean National Identity

National identity of a state helps it define the border between self and other, and helps with defining the interests and foreign policies of the particular state (Chen 2010: 147). In this study the term "national identity" is used to refer to the combination of all four identities that are defined by Wendt. However the "national interest" is still based on Wendt's definition and does not address a sum of interests that arise from national identity. National interest is the objective interest that North Korea pursues in order to realize its corporate identity. It has the

same characteristics with every state on earth however its components are interpreted by Pyongyang in accordance with the other three identities it has (type, role, collective).

6.2 The Analysis of Four North Korean Identity Types

The national identity of North Korea can be analyzed in two levels; the international level and the domestic level, and four structures; international macrostructure, international microstructure, domestic macrostructure and domestic microstructure (Ibid: 147). North Korean corporate and type identities are put under the domestic level because they are more affected by the domestic system, role identity and collective identity are analyzed under the international level in a similar sense. The identity and interest types are analyzed in pairs in order to prevent confusion.

6.2.1 The Domestic Level

Wendt states that “a complete theory of state identity needs to have a large domestic component however these identities are created in the systemic context.” (Wendt 1999: 21). “The states are autonomous from the social system they are embedded, their foreign policy is mainly determined by domestic politics rather than international system. International society does not contribute much to constructing the states since it is not a very thick structure and this triggers the individualism of the states”. (Ibid: 2).

The domestic level can be analyzed in two structures; the domestic macrostructure and the domestic microstructure (Chen 2010: 148). In order to understand North Korean domestic macrostructure one should look at the tendencies that shape the domestic system. The domestic microstructure refers to the interactions within the domestic system (Ibid). In North Korea the main domestic actors of the interactions that shape the national identity are the citizens, military, The Workers’ Party and the leader.

A. Corporate Identity of North Korea

The corporate identity of the state is the main identity that gives a state the title of stateness according to Wendt. In order to realize corporate identity state needs to fulfill its national interest based on physical survival, autonomy, economic well being and collective self esteem. Although other types interests that arise from other identity types are subjective, the national interest is objective; in order to secure the state-society complexes all four of the national interests must be fulfilled (Wendt 1999: 237).

How the domestic macro structure and domestic micro structure have been constructing the North Korean corporate identity can be explained by looking at the macro tendencies and micro interactions within the domestic system.

The largest part of corporate identity is constructed by domestic factors like territory, population and history (Chang 2006: 149). After the post World War Soviet occupation which lasted for three years, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in 1948. In 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea in order to unify the peninsula under communist rule (Freedom House, 2008). After the Korean War the two peninsulas were divided with the demilitarized zone (DMZ) which is the most heavily fortified conflict zone in the post Cold-war era. In the DMZ which crosses the 38th parallel, there are more than 1.8 military personnel including around 37000 American troops (Kim 2004: 3). The North Korean territory is defined by the armistice accord which created DMZ. The North Korean population over 24 million is about the half of South Korean population which is almost 49 million (Central Intelligence Agency). The North Korean corporate identity is objectively defined by these facts and the historical events. However more important than the material aspects of the corporate identity is the national interests in order to understand how Pyongyang defines its interests to maintain its corporate identity. By looking at its definition of four types of national interest, it is possible to depict what kind of corporate identity it tries to reconstruct.

B. Type Identity of North Korea

Type identity refers to the social category of the state in the international system (Fearon 1997 cited in Chen 2010: 149). In other words it is about the regime types of the states (Cox 1987 cited in Chen 2010: 149). North Korea is a highly centralized and militarized totalitarian regime that is organized around a single party and a powerful leader. The six characteristics of totalitarianism that are defined by Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski (1956 cited in Scobell 2006: 3) exists in North Korea; "it has an absolute dictator and mass party, an elaborate ideology, its people live in a condition of terror under a repressive coercive apparatus with centralized economy and the regime has almost full control over the mass communication devices".

The totalitarian type identity of North Korea could be maintained through the fulfilling of subjective interests that could realize this identity. Out of those mentioned interests probably maintaining the military politics is the most important. DPRK is ruled by three main

bureaucratic institutions; “the party” (the Korean Workers’ Party), “the state” (DPRK) and “the military” (Korean People’s Army) (Scobell 2006: 4). Kim Jong Il and his father assigned more importance to the military than the Party and the state bureaucracies (Ibid: 20). In sum the North Korean type identity could be defined as an identity which is based on totalitarian principles and gives priority to military politics.

6.2.2 The International Level

In the international macro structure, states are affected by the “cultures of anarchy” as Wendt calls them; Kantian, Lockean and Hobbesian cultures (Wendt 1999: 246). One of these cultures might be dominating the international society at a particular moment and the states’ perceptions are affected by these cultures, so are their ideas about self and others. Consequently they act in accordance with the perceptions that those cultures bring. The specific type of international culture contributes to the construction of national identity (role and collective identities). (Chen 2010: 148).

International microstructure might constitute of bilateral interaction structure, triangle interaction structure and multilateral interaction structure. The micro structure that is related to the subject of this thesis is the North Korea-South Korea-United States triangle interaction structure. Both international microstructure and international macrostructure contribute to the development of North Korean role and collective identities (Ibid).

A. Role Identity of North Korea

Wendt states that “the culture of the international system is based on the structure of roles” Roles are defined as objective positions that an agent takes in the international society based on the role identity which is a subjective understanding about self. In the international system one of these roles dominates such as the role of enemy or friend, and the states will feel the necessity to internalize these roles in their identities and interests. In this sense, North Korean role identity should be affected by the macro structural tendency, which is the Lockean culture since current scholars believe that the international system is dominated by it. In the Lockean system of anarchy the states recognize each other’s right to exist but they perceive each other as rivals (see Chen 2010: 148 and Wendt 1999: 299).

Although the Lockean culture dominates the international system; the focus of this thesis is the culture that constitutes the triangle interaction structure between North Korea and South

Korea-United States alliance. The culture of anarchy dominating this structure used to be considered as Hobbesian before the Sunshine policy because it was dominated by the role of enmity (Wendt 1999, 261 cited in Cho: 2007).

Although the South Korean policies have tried to change the culture of security into a Lockean culture (see Cho: 2007) North Korea still perceives the US-South Korea alliance as threatening. This perception regarding a Hobbesian culture makes it difficult for North Korea to internalize a role identity of “rival”. It is not easy for North Korea to change roles especially because it sees its foreign policy as a struggle against the imperial powers, and it thinks that in order for foreign policy to be meaningful it should be accompanied by military power, thus the military politics is nurtured by this perception.

The main difference between the enemy and rival is that; “an enemy does not recognize the right of the self to exist as a free subject at all and therefore seeks to “revise” the latter’s life or liberty (“deep” revisionism). A rival in contrast is thought to recognize the self’s right to life and liberty and therefore seeks to revise only its behavior or property (“shallow” revisionism).” In enmity the violence is not “self-limiting” as in rivalry; the violence expected from the other depends on the capabilities (Wendt 1999: 261). The role of enmity is symmetrical and the actor which perceives enmity in other tends to mimic it. “Self mirrors other, becomes its enemy to survive” (Ibid: 263).

B. Collective Identity of North Korea

According to the definition of Wendt (1999: 229), the collective identity is based on type and role identities, having a collective identity leads an actor to see the well being of the Other as the well being of the Self. The collective identity is created as a result of the identification process through which the Self and Other are parts of a whole unit. It can be argued that especially when the South Korean policies directed towards reconciliation and reunification are considered, South Korea was aiming to create a collective identity with North Korea. NCUF aims for reunification through building a national community. The aim of Sunshine policy was declared as eliminating the Cold War structure of North-South relations (Kim 2004 cited in Cho 2007: 5). In order to create a shift in the roles (from enemy to rival) the distribution of ideas should be shifted as well (Cho 2007: 5). This would result in a change in the shared ideas and lead to the formation of a collective identity. South Korea recognized North Korea as a political entity for the first time and declared that it would not attempt a

takeover or absorption. This meant recognition of existence but aiming to revise its behavior which matches the description of the role of “rival”. Sunshine Policy demonstrated that North Korea was no more perceived as an “enemy”. However it seems that Pyongyang still perceives the role of the South as “enemy”, imitates it accordingly and acts to fulfill this role (see Wendt 1999: 263).

6.3 North Korean National Interest

The thesis asserts that the four national interest types that Wendt mentions; survival, autonomy, economic well being and collective self esteem are mainly defined based on the North Korean type, collective and role identities. Although they are objective interests their meaning should be assigned. As Wendt states, all states have different beliefs about how to fulfill those interests (see Wendt 1999).

6.3.1 Physical Survival

Based on *Songun*, the survival of the state-society complex is dependent on the survival of the “body politic” which constitutes of the brain (the leader and the military) and the people which are parts of this military system and culture. According to Wendt the social system – whether it be the social system of people or states- constitutes of material conditions, interests and ideas. He emphasizes the importance of the cultural world and claims that material facts receive their meaning from the meaning they are assigned by the agents.

Within this regard, the body-politic has a material side which shapes the political and social system, an ideational side which is the shared meanings which strengthen and maintain the material aspect. The North Korean society does not prioritize militarization and nuclear weapons despite discontent of the society and the reason that the regime is maintained is not because it is oppressive, it is thanks to the *Songun* ideology that the society has accepted and shaped its life accordingly (Park 2007: 7). In this sense it is possible to assert that “body politic” could only maintain itself by maintaining the material and ideological features that make up this body; prioritizing the military and the *Songun* ideology is what protects this body from tearing apart and maintains the “physical survival”. This “body” refers to the type identity that North Korea tries to reconstruct; it is a “body” which is characterized with military politics and *Juche*.

Military politics is not only a glue which keeps the system together but also it is considered as a protection from the external threats, in that sense it is also nurtured by the role identity. Thomas and Thomas (1928 cited in Wendt 1999: 262) assert; “if actors think enemies are real they are real in consequences”, in this kind of situation, “the military capabilities are seen as crucial” (see Wendt 1999: 262). North Korean physical survival as an interest necessitates that in order to protect the unity of the “body” internally and externally, military politics should be sustained.

6.3.2 Autonomy

Autonomy is defined as “the ability of a state-society complex to exercise control over its allocation of resources and choice of government” what should be done to secure the autonomy could be defined differently by actors (Ibid: 236). Wendt also uses the term “sovereignty” to help with the definition. In political science sovereignty refers to self-sufficiency of the state in a specific territory; supremacy of power in domestic policy, and independency from external powers (Grinin 2008: 22). It is the argument of this thesis that autonomy as an interest defined by North Korea is largely affected by its type identity, as explained below the components of regime structure defines how autonomy is exercised.

In order to exercise its autonomy the leader keeps the coercive apparatus of the regime under his control. This apparatus includes the military, the militia, public security, courts, secret police, and gulags. The regime tries to sustain its control over the people by making them feel that they are watched constantly. It aims to maintain people’s loyalty not only through coercion but also through establishing the feeling of loyalty. The most loyal body of DPRK is the military (Korean People’s Army), this was also reflected by the declaration of *songun* in 1997. The loyalty to the leader is firmed up through the luxury items that the top officers are awarded with (Scobell 2006: 20-24).

The totalitarian regime is also strengthened and maintained through the promotion of totalitarian ideology. Mass mobilization of the society is an important task that helps to infuse the ideology of the regime to people. The people are controlled through the mass organizations and activities more easily. The citizens are put under classes called *songbun*; the regime supporters belong to the “core class”, people who are thought to be unreliable belong to the “wavering class”, and finally a “hostile class” for enemies of the regime exist (Ibid: 25-26).

In sum, the government exercises its autonomy through the use of coercive forces and making the people accept its ideologies through the mass media, mass mobilization and education. Moreover the functions of military such as being the “problem solver, provider, and teacher” (see Park: 2007) makes it an indispensable characteristic of society. In other words military politics is a tool for establishing autonomy both materially and ideologically.

Wendt (1999: 234) states: “objective national interests are not merely normative guidelines for action, but causal powers that predispose states to act in a certain way. It is in part because states have certain security needs that they define their subjective interests as they do”. Autonomy exists as a security need however as a subjective interest “autonomy” is assigned with other meanings such as its definition through the *Juche* ideology in terms of not depending on external power militarily and economically.

6.3.3 Economic Well-Being

The economic well being in North Korea depends on the type identity which prepares the grounds for a communist economy. In a totalitarian regime, it is natural that regime aims to control most of the economic activity. Pyongyang economic system is based on a central planning which determines what should be produced, the price and the quantity of products. The products are distributed by the network of the regime in which military personnel plays an important role. Since citizens do not know in advance the supply of the products they hoard what they already have, and the products supplied are usually inadequate (Scobell 2006: 34-37). The inadequacy of supply led to the emergence of black market and corruption. The famine which became quite salient in the mid-1990’s demonstrated the inadequacy of the regime. In order to fix the economic problems Pyongyang allowed NGO’s to operate in the country. In 2005 it reactivated its public distribution system and ameliorated the famine to some extent, this was enough for Pyongyang to push out the NGO’s and claim that they had recovered from the famine. The reason was that the regime did not want its people to think that the regime depended on economic assistance (Ibid). This reflects the *Juche* understanding which could be understood as one of the defining elements of economic strategy. North Korea does not define economic well being as the economic well being of its citizens, keeping the economic well being at a level which keeps the regime from collapsing is adequate because more priority is given to the stability of the regime than the economic state of people. *Juche* ideology is maintained to sustain the support of people.

Wendt asserts that sometimes states give priority to some of the national interests over others but if it does not fulfill all four interests the state will die out in the long run (Wendt 1999: 237). Based on this claim one could consider that if a state which prioritizes survival interest over economic well being and does not fulfill the latter, it will die out; this could also be the case for North Korea which gives relatively low emphasis on the economic well being. Nevertheless North Korean system is based on an interesting formula; the high emphasis on military politics and the ideology which supports it gives a protection to Kim regime although the economic-well being has low priority, the main question is how long this protection could last.

6.3.4 Collective Self-Esteem

The collective self esteem as a national interest refers to “a group’s need to feel good about itself, for respect and status”. In a Hobbesian culture self esteem is reflected by the need for “glory” and “power” because states do not achieve recognition for their sovereignty (Wendt 1999: 237). The ambition to obtain power and glory could be noticed in North Korean interests, in that sense North Korea has adopted a Hobbesian culture of self esteem which uses military politics and *Juche* ideology to maintain an identity which is believed to be powerful by the citizens, thus paving the way for regime survival. In addition the Hobbesian culture it perceives pushes it to achieve recognition in the international arena as well.

7. Conclusion

The thesis has discussed one of the reasons why NCUF which is the only official reunification plan of South Korea has not been fulfilled yet by referring to Lee Myung Bak government’s Three Communities Initiative which is a successor plan of NCUF. A community oriented approach was fruitful in understanding the NCUF and its shortcomings arising from its prioritization of economic community without mentioning a peace community. The thesis does not fully support the Lee government’s hardline policy towards North Korea; cutting the economic ties has resulted in more tensions and changed the North Korean perception of South in a sharp negative way, it is also against the idea of unification with absorption. However it agrees that without establishing a peace community economic and social cooperation is doomed to failure.

The unification should be realized through a gradual process which could reform North Korean regime after it accepts democracy and market economy in time, if a stage such as

commonwealth is excluded and North Korea is absorbed through a direct political unification this would create internal tensions. In that sense NCUF's three stage plan is fruitful however its principles of prioritization do not fully adapt to the North Korean system.

I have chosen an idealist theory in order to focus more on North Korean perception of South Korean unification formula and policies in this sense I focus both material and ideational interaction between South and North Korea and the USA, regarding the security aspect. The material interaction in form of economic cooperation was meaningful only to the extent Pyongyang perceived it, similarly the value given to militarization depends on North Korean perception since the meaning of the material world is defined by the actors themselves (see Wendt, 1999). I also try to pose an explanation regarding the culture of anarchy based on the perceptions of Pyongyang also placing North Korea within the broad map of social structure.

If Neorealism was applied to explain the North Korean foreign policy based on military politics, North Korea would be seen as a state which is trying to survive in the anarchical system, and acting on the self-help principle. However the states are not identical although they have identical components which are defined under the term "corporate identity" by Wendt, they carry different identities and act in order to realize them. State is an agent which is similar to a human being, rather than something mechanic which reacts to the anarchical system, only by taking this perspective it would be possible to see how ideas shape state's behavior as in the case of North Korea which is a state that has been strongly affected and shaped by the *Juche* and *Songun* ideologies throughout the history. It is mainly the military politics which lies behind the excessive militarization and nuclearization of North Korea. In order to explain better, it is necessary to define which type of identities *Songun* and *Juche* are embedded in.

In this sense, the analysis has been made by using the four main identity types of Wendt's theory. The corporate identity has more or less similar aspects in all states however national interest which is based on it is affected by other types of identities.

Firstly North Korean type identity which is determined by totalitarian regime type carries characteristics of both *Songun* and *Juche*, in other words the regime is ideologically based on them and materially the military is prioritized over the party and is based on self-reliance principle, type identity is characterized by a regime that rejects relying on others and uses *Songun* to maintain the regime.

Secondly the role identity of Pyongyang is shaped according to how it perceives the international system, the previous South Korean efforts of engagement have aimed to change the Hobbesian culture of anarchy that creates a hostile tendency in the macro structure, in other words if states perceive that other actors have taken the role of enemy this would create a tendency in the system to develop the same roles (see Wendt). However Seoul's initiatives were not able to change this culture into a Lockean one because Pyongyang continued to perceive the international environment as hostile and stuck to its self-help principle, its continuation of nuclear program was the behavior arising from this perception.

If the shared ideas regarding the roles could be changed this could result in a collective identity between Seoul and Pyongyang which is based on commonalities, a national community could shift the roles of enmity (see Cho 2007). Although Seoul is trying to build collective identity Pyongyang's perceptions of Seoul as an "enemy" is still very resistant. The definition of an enemy is also embedded within the *Songun* culture as pointed out earlier.

The thesis concludes that the perception of the triangular micro structure as "imperial power" that North Korea should struggle with is embedded in the domestic ideological principles. In that sense the military motivations of Pyongyang are interests arising from its role identity and lack of collective identity, which lead her to mimic her "enemy".

The national interests of North Korea were also explained in the following sections and concluded that physical survival is defined with the survival of "body politic" which is largely shaped by the military's role in the system, the military covers an important part in the daily life and culture and functions as a "glue" to keep the social structure together also it is defined as the brain of this body politic, and the actor which protects the body from outside. Thus its survival is the survival of the whole "body". Autonomy as a national interest is also linked with military because autonomy from outside is defined with military and economic independence from outside (*Juche*) and leads to the prioritization of military. Autonomy inside is also strengthened through military coercion and *Songun* ideology. Economic well being is defined through the centralized economy which rejects outside help based on *Juche* principle. Military spending is prioritized over economic well being and poses a threat for human security. The Hobbesian type of self esteem that North Korea possesses is also based on gaining power and this demonstrates itself in gaining military power.

In sum, the existence of the ideologies *Juche* and *Songun* is salient in North Korean national identity and interests. This could provide an explanation to its prioritization of nuclear program over low politics based on economic interaction and why the South Korean functionalist formula has failed to reach the expected standards of reconciliation and cooperation necessary for unification. It was considered that economic and social cooperation would result in political cooperation, however Pyongyang has been reluctant even in accepting the aid from Seoul because of its *Juche* ideology, the engagement policies were interpreted as a “trap” to make Pyongyang dependent on the South (see Chang 2006). Also it prioritized military politics over the benefits that it could gain from further cooperation and this has posed a threat for the peaceful reconciliation. The change that could be triggered in the North is limited because the regime limits cooperation to the extent that the society is not affected by outside ideology and the leader sustains his autonomy.

Without solving the issues related to Pyongyang’s militarization and nuclearization, it is not possible to establish a peace regime, and without a peace regime it is difficult to reach further integration. Pyongyang could not be persuaded for cooperation through an engagement policy which only prioritizes economic and social exchange. Thus it is certain that achieving a peace community at first place could lead to better cooperation. A peace community could change the Hobbesian culture into a Lockean one and make Pyongyang adopt the role of the rival against Seoul. Seoul will no longer be perceived as an “enemy” and an ally of an “imperial” power, it will be easier for the two states to build a collective identity based on national identity, “self-reliance” principle would not be applied to South Korea in such a case, and North Korea could open up itself and this could finally result in a peaceful unification of the peninsula.

Executive Summary

The question of Korean reunification is one of the most significant contemporary issues because of several reasons; first of all it is the key to the stability of Northeast, secondly there is excessive military spending that is spent for around 2 million troops in both countries. Thirdly the two Korean societies were forced to accept different political systems which shaped their values and personalities and the longer they are divided the more heterogeneous the Korean society gets and this creates a greater burden for integration (66 Shuja 2003). Fourthly the unification could end not only traditional security issues but also human security issues in North Korea.

Most scholars who study Korean unification agree that the reunification should happen under South Korean guidance mainly because its political and economic system could pose an example to North Korean reform and its integration into the international world (7TC). Moreover South Korea has engaged in many initiatives that aimed unification, many politicians have involved a unification policy into their agendas and the National Community Unification Formula (NCUF) which is the only official South Korean unification formula is a suitable approach because of its focus on community building.

The research question of the thesis is “*Why has not the South Korean National Unification Formula been successful yet?*” In other words it tries to answer why South Korean unification formula has not been achieved by linking the answer to the North Korean regime, to be more specific; its national identity which shapes its interests. Within this framework there are two hypotheses; 1. The North Korean military politics which is the main reason behind the excessive militarization is embedded in North Korean identity and interests. 2. The main problem with the NCUF is that it prioritized economic community over peace community and this was not adequate to resolve the quagmire because of the first hypothesis.

NCUF was mainly based on functionalism and it focused on economic exchange and cooperation as it was presumed that economic cooperation would lead to cooperation in the areas of political and security. Probably one of the most important issues which have prevailed between the two Koreas is the peace settlement issue which has not been resolved by the NCUF. NCUF is based on low politics however this clashes North Korean understanding of international relation which prioritizes high politics; North Korea gives

priority to its nuclear programme because of its military first politics, thus a policy which did not focus on denuclearizing North Korea at first place and establishing a peace regime could not be successful in reaching its ends (Three communities, 12). Throughout the history Pyongyang has used its nuclear program for negotiation with great powers in exchange for assistance, although gaining economic help is not the sole purpose behind its nuclear ambitions. The country which has already claimed to have nuclear weapons in 2005 and has also been conducting tests since 2006, and is considered as a threat to the global community (Ji Hyun Kim, 249).

The thesis also refers to the Three Communities Initiative that was proposed by Lee Myung Bak regime in order to supplement the NCUF. In that sense Lee Myung Bak criticizes the previous engagement policies because they provided aid to North Korea without demanding suspension of its nuclear program. The Three Communities plan is a three stage formula once peace community is established, the establishment of economic community would proceed and the national community would be formed based on them (TC 21). It should be noted that the thesis does not fully support the Lee government's hardline policy towards North Korea; cutting the economic ties has resulted in more tensions and changed the North Korean perception of South in a sharp negative way. However it agrees that without establishing a peace community economic and social cooperation is doomed to failure and links this argument to the military first politics of North Korea. Therefore the main focus of the analysis is neither the NCUF nor the Three Communities Initiative, although they form the subject of the analysis. The focus is on the North Korean national identity and interests that are shaped by it.

The thesis adopts the constructivist perspective of Alexander Wendt, building all the analysis on the Social Theory of International Politics. According to this theory state is an agent which is similar to a human being, rather than something mechanic which reacts to the anarchical system, only by taking this perspective it would be possible to see how ideas shape state's behavior as in the case of North Korea which is a state that has been strongly affected and shaped by the *Juche* and *Songun* ideologies throughout the history. It is mainly the military politics (*Songun*) which lies behind the excessive militarization and nuclearization of North Korea. In order to explain better, it is necessary to define which type of identity *Songun* and *Juche* are embedded in.

The *Songun* Politics which was introduced by Kim Jong Il in 1998 put forward a new North Korea which should be strong economically, militarily and in terms of political ideology. Nuclear capability especially carried great significance (58 Habib). It is largely based on the *Juche* ideology since *Juche* itself necessitates the military self reliance. In order to maintain his rule by not letting North Korea to be affected by external powers, trends or ideas Kim Il Sung maintained *Juche*, also it was a response to the “imperialism” of the USA and its troops in South Korea. A country which should not depend on others and which perceives a threat like “imperialism” has to rely on self power and most importantly military power. As a result of this domestic belief system that has affected the society ideologically and materially, military has become the bone of social life, politics and centralized economy. It is seen as the force that protects the “body politic” from external powers, rules it and keeps it together. In such a society nuclear weapons could even be seen as something that reinforces the national pride. Thus in many ways *Juche* and *Songun* shape the identities of Pyongyang.

The national identity of North Korea can be analyzed in two levels; the international level and the domestic level, and four structures; international macrostructure, international microstructure, domestic macrostructure and domestic microstructure (Chen, 147). North Korean corporate and type identities are put under the domestic level because they are more affected by the domestic system, role identity and collective identity are analyzed under the international level in a similar sense. The identity and interest types are analyzed in pairs in order to prevent confusion.

Firstly the North Korean type identity which is determined by totalitarian regime type carries characteristics of both *Songun* and *Juche*, in other words the regime is ideologically based on them and materially the military is prioritized over the party and is based on self-reliance principle, type identity is characterized by a regime that rejects relying on others and uses *songun* to maintain the regime.

Secondly the role identity of Pyongyang is shaped according to how it perceives the international system, the previous South Korean efforts of engagement have aimed to change the Hobbesian culture of anarchy that creates a hostile tendency in the macro structure, in other words if states perceive that other actors have taken the role of enemy this would create a tendency in the system to develop the same roles (see Wendt). However Seoul’s initiatives were not able to change this culture into a Lockean one because Pyongyang continued to

perceive the international environment as hostile and stuck to its self-help principle, its continuation of nuclear program was the behavior arising from this perception.

If the shared ideas regarding the roles could be changed this could result in a collective identity between Seoul and Pyongyang which is based on commonalities, a national community could shift the roles of enmity (see Cho). Although Seoul is trying to build collective identity Pyongyang's perceptions of Seoul as an "enemy" is still very resistant.

This perception of the triangular micro structure as "imperial power" that it should struggle with is embedded in the domestic ideological principles based on *Juche*. Thus the military motivations of Pyongyang are interests arising from its role identity and lack of collective identity, which lead her to mimic her "enemy".

The national interests of a country are defined as; autonomy, physical survival, economic well being and collective self esteem. The thesis concludes that in North Korea physical survival is defined with the survival of "body politic" which is largely shaped by the military's role in the system, the military covers an important part in the daily life and culture and functions as a "glue" to keep the social structure together also it is defined as the brain of this body politic, and the actor which protects the body from outside. Thus its survival is the survival of the whole "body". Autonomy as a national interest is also linked with military Wendt (236) defines autonomy as "the ability of a state-society complex to exercise control over its allocation of resources and choice of government". Wendt also uses the term "sovereignty" to help with the definition. In political science sovereignty refers to self-sufficiency of the state in a specific territory; supremacy of power in domestic policy, and independency from external powers (Grinin, 22). In that sense the thesis looks at North Korean definition of autonomy from two perspectives and concludes that autonomy from outside is defined with military and economic independence from outside (*Juche*) and leads to the prioritization of military. Autonomy inside is also strengthened through military coercion and *Songun* ideology. Another interest type is the economic well being which is defined through the centralized economy which rejects outside help based on *Juche* principle. Military spending is prioritized over economic well being and poses a threat for human security. The Hobbesian type of collective self esteem that North Korea possesses is also based on gaining power and this demonstrates itself in gaining military power.

When the analysis was made it was found out that the existence of the ideologies *Juche* and *Songun* is salient in North Korean national identity and interests. This could provide an explanation to its prioritization of nuclear programme over low politics based on economic interaction and why the South Korean functionalist formula has failed to reach the expected standards of reconciliation and cooperation necessary for unification. It is hoped that in the future the current unification formula is amended in a way to meet both North Korean interests and result in a peaceful unification of the peninsula.

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